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A SERIOUS
FLIRTATION!

Parties wishing to negotiate for the production of this Play, will address,

H. J. METTENHEIMER,

Box 3,195,

CINCINNATI, O.

CINCINNATI:

Elm Street Printing Company, 176 and 178 Elm Street.

1873.

A SERIOUS FLIRTATION.

A PLAY

IN

FOUR ACTS.

BY

H. J. METTENHEIMER.

CINCINNATI:

ELM STREET PRINTING COMPANY, 176 & 178 ELM STREET.

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“A Serious Flirtation.”

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

- ✓ ADAM GUDGEON.....An Emotional Lover.
- HON. WILEY MANNERS.....A Christian Statesman.
- COLUMBUS GOPEPPER.....A Rural Rooster.
- ✓ MR. DALRYMPLE – A Banker.....Father of Dido and Tom.
- ✓ TOM DALRYMPLE.....A Collegian who feels his Oats.
- GUY FITZGORY.....A Relic of a Departing Race.
- REV WESLEY JONES.....An Itinerant Preacher.
- ✓ MISS DIDO DALRYMPLE.....A First-class Flirt.
- ✓ MISS JANE GUDGEON.....A Theme for a Pastoral.
- ✓ MRS. GUDGEON.....Mother of Adam and Jane.
- MISS JYNKYNS.....One of the “ Beau-monde.”
- BATHSHEBA GOPEPPER.....One of the “ Canaille.”

A SERIOUS FLIRTATION.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Lawn at Gudgeon's Country House. Cottage with porch. Ladder against the porch.*

Enter COLUMBUS and BATHSHEBA GOPEPPER.

Bath. Columbus, you had better be attending to your own business instead of idling your time away around here. What brought you over this morning?

Gop. A dispatch from Senator Manners stating that he would be down on the early train, and requesting me, as the most prominent citizen of the village, to see that a proper reception was accorded him.

Bath. Show me the dispatch.

Gop. (*Fumbling in his pockets.*) I must have mislaid it.

Bath. How often have I told you that there was no use in your lying to me?

Gop. Let us waive this question of veracity and try to gather a crowd to receive the Senator.

Bath. What for?

Gop. It may further my political aspirations to attract the notice of so distinguished a statesman.

Bath. Political aspirations! Bosh. You had better be digging potatoes.

Gop. Sister, I have a soul above potatoes. I yearn to take my stand among the magnates of the nation, and I am going to take it there. You are too commonplace; too groveling. I intend to lift the name of Gopepper from obscurity, and carve it on the pages of history; before which the names of Alexander, of Cæsar, of Washington, of George Francis Train, shall pale in the lesser fire of their insignificance.

Bath. Heigho! I am not sorry now that I accepted Mrs. Gudgeon's request.

Gop. What request?

Bath. Why this Dido Dalrymple, who has been spending the summer with the Gudgeons, has coaxed Jane to spend the winter in town with them.

Gop. The Dalrymples are very wealthy. Are they not?

Bath. Yes; and I believe young Tom is in love with Jane Gudgeon.

Gop. The whipper snapper! He is only nineteen years old.

Bath. Well, Jane is only sixteen.

Gop. But I have a sneaking kindness for her myself.

Bath. She is too good a girl to return your sneaking kindness.

Gop. Pshaw! Tom is nothing but a boy.

Bath. A good healthy one. I have promised to keep house for Mrs. Gudgeon while Jane is away.

Gop. And what is going to become of my house?

Bath. I don't know. I am growing tired of acting guardian to such an overgrown lummax—the laughing-stock of the village.

Gop. Laughing-stock? Bathsheba! Feeling that in-born—that inborn—what's his name? within me, I can, like the immortal Ajax, defy the lightning.

Bath. Any jackass can do that. But go your ways to the poor house. Here come the young folks.

[*Exit BATH. and COL.*

Enter DIDO, JANE and TOM.

Dido. I wish you would learn your place, Tom. It doesn't look well for you to be following a couple of girls all the time.

Tom. A couple of girls! I am following but one.

Dido. Well, she doesn't want you.

Tom. She hasn't told me so.

Dido. Tell him to go, Jane. I know you wish to be rid of the big baby.

Tom. I wish I was her baby.

Jane. Go about your business.

Dido. Don't you see we wish to be alone?

Tom. Now that isn't according to the Rule of Three at college.

Dido. What would college etiquette be under the circumstances?

Tom. Why, you see, when two roosters get together and a nice little pullet comes along, one of the roosters has manners enough to leave.

Dido. But when two nice little pullets get together, they do not want any roosters about.

Tom. Speak for yourself. Here, Jane, tie my cravat and I will go.

Jane. Your sister can do it better than I.

Dido. Tie it for goodness' sake to get rid him.

Jane. What kind of a bow do you want?

Dido. Make a hard knot of it, so it will last all day.

Jane. (*Tying cravat.*) How will that do?

Tom. That's the lick. Looks as if I didn't care a damn, you know. Thank you. (*Snatches a kiss and runs off.*)

Jane. Well, I never!

Dido. Never?

Jane. Never saw such a forward man.

Dido. You see Tom is in love with you, and he is too young to conceal it.

Jane. In love with me?

Dido. Poor Tom! To think how much good soul gushing lollipop he has wasted on you, and you not know it.

Jane. I never thought of such a thing. How does it feel to be in love?

Dido. I have never had any personal experience, but judging from those I have seen under the influence of the passion, it must make one feel very much like a simpleton.

“ Two geese with but a single thought,
Two hearts that beat as one.”

Jane. Two souls with but a single thought.

Dido. Yes, the single thought is money.

“ Oh, breathes there a prospect in nature or art,
Like the vista that shines through the purse to the heart.”

Jane. For shame, Dido. Poor Adam!

Dido. What! is Adam in love, too?

Jane. Yes, and is wasting a heap more lollipop than Tom ever did.

Dido. On whom?

Jane. On you.

Dido. I will encourage him.

Jane. But hasn't Senator Manners proposed to you?

Dido. Yes; but so have a dozen others, and I can not marry them all; at least, not all at once.

Jane. If a man were to pop the question to me, I would be scared enough to stand on my head. What do you think of Adam?

Dido. Rather favorable than otherwise. I believe if your brother were to offer himself, I would accept him.

Jane. Dear Dido! And marry him?

Dido. Oh, no.

Jane. Why deceive him?

Dido. For fun. Adam is so sincere in everything, that he needs a lesson; and I am a natural angler. I hook my game to play with it, and see it wriggle.

Jane. Adam wouldn't wriggle long; he would die.

Dido. Pshaw! There never was a case of love that wouldn't yield to a blue pill.

Jane. What are you twirling in your fingers?

Dido. A written proposal from Mr. Guy Fitzgory.

Jane. What a name!

Dido. One of the best in America. He prides himself on his name, and the color of his blood.

Jane. We Americans are a bloody people.

Dido. Yes, and the Fitzgorys claim that their blood is blue—sky blue. Guy is a thin sort of sport; one of those fellows who know everything (*with a drawl*); *been there, you know.* He was going through here a week ago and sent this note flying through my chamber window. This way—(*Throws note on top of the porch.*) No, not that way. It has gone as wide of the mark as when he threw it himself.

Jane. A woman never could throw straight.

Dido. How can I get it back?

Jane. (*Takes ladder and sets it up.*) Here is Adam's pruning ladder.

Dido. What, climb up! I'll do it; it will be so undignified. I hope no one is about. (*Climbs up ladder.*) Oh! how it shakes.

Jane. I'll hold it for you.

Dido. Hold it tight; if I were to fall on your head it might hurt you.

Jane. (*Laughing.*) I'll call Adam to hold it. He won't mind your falling on him. I think he would rather like it. (*DIDO'S shoe falls off.*)

Dido. Don't be silly. Pshaw! there goes my slipper. I must come down and get it.

Jane. Go on and let it be.

Dido. I hear some one coming.

Jane. You don't.

Dido. (*Gets on top of the porch.*) Now, I'm up. I'll rest awhile.

Jane. If you do, I'll take the ladder away.

Dido. Well, I'm coming; the thing is so rickety, how in the world am I to get down?

Jane. Here's a nice board. I'll turn the smooth side up and you can slide down.

Dido. But I'm afraid. Oh, mercy! What am I to do? And there is a man coming!

Jane. I see no man.

Dido. Neither do I, but I smell a cigar.

Enter TOM and ADAM.

Tom. Hallo, Sis! What are you doing up there?

Dido. Please, Tom, help me down.

Tom. Let Adam do it. Come, puss, let us leave them together. He wants to be with her alone, by moonlight, etc.

Jane. I prefer to remain here.

Tom. Nonsense! Let us go where nobody will disturb us while I kiss you good-by.

Jane. Let me go, you presuming scamp.

Tom. Don't you put on any scollops about me. I'm up to all that sort of thing. (*Puts his arm around her waist and drags her off*)

Dido. Oh, don't leave me; they are gone. You go too, please, so I can get down by myself.

Adam. Nay, my arm is strong enough for two such. (*Goes up the ladder and lifts her down.*) There, birdie, you are safe.

Dido. Thank you.

Adam. (*Picking up her shoe and kissing it.*) (*Aside.*) Is it any wonder a man should lose his wits over a woman who can wear a shoe like that?

Dido. Please let me have my shoe, the ground hurts my foot.

Adam. Let me put it on.

Dido. Give me the slipper. I am used to waiting on myself.

Adam. It is only a gentleman's privilege that I ask.

Dido. Do gentlemen esteem it a privilege to do a maid servant's work?

Adam. The office I seek is a knightly one, and you must give me a reason for refusing to let me perform it.

Dido. If you insist on a reason, I have a hole in my stocking.

Adam. A merry answer, but I am not satisfied.

Dido. Here then, Sir Knight of the Hoof, put on the slipper.

Adam. (*Kneels and puts it on.*) There lady, it went on easier than I thought possible for a shoe so small.

Dido. You flatter me; get up.

Adam. I would rather remain here.

Dido. Let go my foot, and you can remain there as long as you please.

Adam. I know the situation is distressing to you, and I should be man enough to spare you, but I am not. You have long avoided this interview, and have started from my approach as the timid hare starts from the hunter, at the mere falling of a leaf.

Dido. Beautiful!

Adam. I would rather you mocked me than avoided me.

Dido. You look like a goose.

Adam. I am aware that my appearance is ungainly, and that I always act like a fool in your presence. You are so different from the people around me that a choking feeling comes into my throat whenever I see you. And then I know my own unworthiness, and wonder if the angels are like you.

Dido. You are in love with me, I suppose, but do not talk about angels.

Adam. I will go to town and make money, that I may be more worthy of you.

Dido. Make money! What has that to do with love?

Adam. Everything; money is considered an equivalent for all the manly graces, and all the Christian virtues combined.

Dido. But money making is not a fitting occupation for the knight errant I would favor.

Adam. The faculty to steal it by force of brains is as much a test of manhood in our day, as it was to steal it by force of arms in days gone by.

Dido. I prefer the knights of old.

Adam. Be it so, lady, I will serve you as you wish.

Dido. Then I command you to rise.

Adam. Accepted?

Dido. Yes, yes.

Adam. (*Rising.*) Let me seal the promise with this ring. (*Places a ring on her finger, and attempts to kiss her.*)

Dido. (*Breaking away.*) Oh, no! I have been eating onions. (*Runs off.*)

Adam. Can this be true? or am I dreaming? I feel a thrill of joy breaking over me that I have never known before. She accepted my suit. Her words were, *yes! yes!* She repeated the *yes* to remove all doubt from my mind. Are all women so easily won? Do they all receive a man's homage in such a matter-of-fact way? Does their love never warm them into an exhibition of feeling? She was as cold and passionless as a statue. She *does* love me though. Poor girl; she has been taught to conceal her emotion, and has gone to her room to give vent to it. I hardly know how to act myself. I am not a praying man; but I do feel so full that I would be an ingrate indeed were I to forget to thank heaven that I now have something to live for. (*Stands in an attitude of prayer.*)

Enter old DALRYMPLE.

Dal. Hallo! young man! why are you praying so late in the morning?

Adam. I have just found something to pray for.

Dal. And want to be prompt about it before you forget it. May I inquire the object of your *orisons*?

Adam. Your daughter, Dido.

Dal. Umph! I know of no one more in need of your prayers than Dido; and I thank you for your willingness to assume a duty I acknowledge having neglected.

Adam. Was ever man so blessed? You consent then?

Dal. Of course; pray for her as much as you please, but be more careful of her reputation hereafter, and seek a more private place to do it in.

Adam. You do not fully comprehend my meaning. I wish your daughter for my wife.

Dal. Oh! you are anxious for her temporal as well as her spiritual salvation. (*Laughing.*) I have no objection to you, young man, as a son-in-law.

Adam. Thank you! Oh, thank you!

Dal. Nonsense; but hadn't you better ask the lady herself?

Adam. I have done so.

Dal. And what did the jade say?

Adam. She said, yes.

Dal. (*Breaks into a violent fit of laughter.*) I thought so.

Adam. What are you laughing at? I know full well that I am unworthy of her; but still am not so base a clown as to merit your ridicule.

Dal. (*Laughing violently.*) You make the third man she has promised to marry this month.

Adam. Then she is past praying for.

Dal. Don't take it so hard, man, I was only jesting. (*Aside.*) He makes the fourth.

Adam. You should be more careful of your words, when such a jest may stab a man to the heart.

Dal. I never heard of a man having such a thing before. (*Aside.*) The incorrigible vixen.

Adam. Have I your consent to our marriage, if your daughter will marry me?

Dal. (*Restraining a laugh.*) Oh, certainly!

Adam. Then I am satisfied. No woman would trifle with a lover on such a subject, and I will not do Miss Dido so great an injustice as to doubt her sincerity.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Lane in rear of GUDGEON'S house. Enter SENATOR MANNERS.*

Man. If I can reach the house this way, my ruse to escape another of these everlasting receptions will be successful. I wish the rest of my errand could be disposed of as easily. (*Draws a paper from his pocket.*) This needs a witness. If I forge a name, I may be called upon to produce the author of the signature. I must have a live person this time; but where am I to find him?

Gop. (*From without.*) Here's the man.

Man. (*Starting.*) Who was that?

Enter GOPEPPER.

Gop. Here you are. Found you at last, old fellow.

Man. Old fellow! My familiar friend, who are you?

Gop. Columbus Gopepper.

Man. Columbus, I am glad to know you.

Gop. (*Shaking hands.*) So are all my acquaintances.

Man. What is your business with me, Columbus?

Gop. I have gathered all the fellows in the neighborhood to give you a hearty welcome, and we are waiting for you.

Man. Couldn't you and the rest of the fellows find some other victim?

Gop. We could find a better man if we lived in a larger place, but first-class shows never visit country towns.

Man. Umph! You appear to be the moving spirit in the affair. How much do you ask for your kindness?

Gop. A soft place under the Government.

Man. What will you do to earn it?

Gop. Anything you require.

Man. Can you tell a ready lie, and swear to it?

Gop. As easily as yourself.

Man. Can you hold your tongue, and mind your own business?

Gop. Place me in a position where the nation most needs disinterested patriotism and unswerving integrity, and command me.

Man. (*Producing a paper.*) Then sign this paper.

Gop. What is it?

Man. That is none of your business.

Gop. As I haven't anything but my character worth signing away, give me a pen and ink. (*MANNERS draws pen and ink from his pocket, and holds his hat for a desk. While he is doing this GOPEPPER whistles the "Rogue's March," and MANNERS looks at him in surprise.*)

Man. Confound your impudence. You are whistling the Rogue's March.

Gop. Excuse me. We have no band in our neighborhood, and I am engaged to furnish the music for your reception.

Man. Oh! (*Offering pen.*) Sign.

Gop. (*Taking the pen.*) Where?

Man. (*Pointing.*) There. (*GOPEPPER signs and MANNERS replaces the paper in his pocket.*) You have witnessed the marriage certificate of Miss Dido Dalrymple and myself.

Gop. Have I?

Man. You will say nothing about this until called on, and then declare you saw the ceremony performed.

Gop. I will swear to it.

Man. You deserve to succeed in politics. Come to Washington and I will help you. I see a lady coming. Now go.

Gop. The neighbors wish to see an honest politician. You must present yourself when we call you out. [*Exit.*]

Enter DIDO.

Man. Why, dew drop, you were coming to meet me, were you not?

Dido. Considering that we expected you at the front door, and this is the back one, you can draw your own inference.

Man. Is that a welcome for a husband?

Dido. Do you ever forget a joke?

Man. I am glad to meet you alone. Would you believe now that what you call a joke was sober earnest?

Dido. Do you allude to our mock marriage?

Man. It was not a mock one. When you proposed that we get up a sham wedding to amuse our friends, a month ago, I thought seriously enough of the subject to procure the services of a real clergyman.

Dido. Are you my *bona-fide* husband?

Man. (*Producing paper.*) Here is our marriage certificate, properly signed and witnessed.

Dido. (*Taking paper and reading it.*) It appears we were married by Wesley Jones.

Man. Yes.

Dido. Then Wesley Jones and Wiley Manners are a pair of unprincipled scoundrels.

Man. Your statement has my unqualified indorsement.

Dido. I shall tell father to get me a divorce.

Man. You will do no such thing. The notoriety you would gain would ruin your matrimonial prospects for life, and I doubt if you can do any better even without such a drawback.

Dido. Is this is your only reply?

Man. No; last winter I fell in love with you, proposed, and was accepted.

Dido. A mere flirtation on my part.

Man. I knew it. I was anxious to make it something more than a mere flirtation, however; and when, in a spirit of mischief you suggested a sham wedding, I took advantage of the situation, and made you my darling, precious wife.

Dido. I shall never assume the duties of that exalted condition.

Man. I will allow you a year to prepare for that responsibility.

Dido. And what then?

Man. Then, to save you any mortification, we will have the ceremony repeated.

Dido. (*Sneering.*) Will you always be as kind and considerate?

Man. When you are accustomed to look upon yourself as my wife, you will become reconciled to the stratagem. I am not a repulsive man, and have heretofore found considerable favor in your eyes. The fact that I love you to distraction should be a sufficient excuse for the measure I adopted to secure such a treasure.

Dido. You were actuated to this villainy by some other motive than love for me.

Man. Yes. I am an adventurer; poor, and consequently reckless.

Dido. If you are poor, how did you ever get into the Senate?

Man. The money was furnished by capitalists who use me. The accession of wealth is, therefore, simply a question of time with me, and this marriage will firmly establish me in society. I will be thoroughly respectable when you acknowledge me as your husband, and then will endeavor to make you the happiest woman in the country.

Dido. And if I am obliged to submit to this fraud, I will make you the most miserable man in the country.

Man. Impossible. It is a source of pleasure to sit and look at you, and I shall always have that privilege.

Dido. I will run away with some other rascal.

Man. I will trust you.

Dido. You are an insinuating scamp, and I am almost tempted to forgive you.

Man. If you do you shall never have occasion to regret our union.

Dido. Well, you may die in a year, and you say you will give me that time to think the matter over.

Man. Let me place this ring on your finger to help your memory. (*Takes her hand, and she reaches out a finger.*) That is not the finger.

Dido. Here, then. (*Offers another finger.*)

Man. Nor that. This is the proper one. Umph! There is a ring on it already. To the victor belongs the spoils. (*Removes from her hand the ring ADAM gave her and places it on his own; then places another ring on her finger*)

Dido. (*Aside.*) Poor Adam!

Man. Let us go to the house.

Dido. (*Flashing the ring.*) (*Aside.*) I ought to be grateful to my honorable suitor for deciding this matter for me. I intended to marry either him or Adam, and he has relieved me of the responsibility of choosing. I admire Manners for his assurance, and Adam for his honesty. As I do not love either to any alarming extent, I suppose I can cultivate a sentiment for my husband as easily as I could for the other man.

Man. (*Offering his arm.*) Come, wife.

Dido. (*Taking his arm.*) Husband, I obey. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Same as Scene I.*

Enter GOPEPPER and followers.

Gop. Now, fellows, yell for Manners. (*A cry for "MANNERS! MANNERS!"*)

Gop. Louder! Manners!! (*Another yell.* MANNERS emerges from the house, accompanied by DALRYMPLE, ADAM, TOM and MRS GUDGEON.)

Gop. Hurrah for Manners! (*His followers hurrah.*)

Man. I am wholly unprepared for this reception, my friends, and must beg you to excuse me. I am truly glad to see you, and feel flattered at the very cordial welcome you have extended me. As I barely have time to get a little refreshment and make the next train, I must ask your indulgence, and request my esteemed friend, Mr. Gopepper, to entertain you. God bless you. (*Retires into the house, followed by DALRYMPLE.*)

Adam. And that is a Senator? He is much like our neighbors, with the exception of better manners and finer clothing. I wonder if city life will put the same polish on me?

Mrs. G. Nay, my son, you must not think of the city.

Adam. You shall always have a corner at my fireside, mother, wherever it may be. (ADAM and MRS. GUDGEON retire into the house.)

Tom. Say, Columbus, get on top of the porch and make a speech, while I kiss Jane good-by again. I have to go back to college to-night.

Gop. Gentle stranger, you are buzzing around my lump f sugar too promiscuously.

Tom. Your lump of sugar?

Gop. Discarding the metaphor, you are slobbering too freely over a lady who is to be my wife.

Tom. Eh! Your wife!

Gop. Yes. Jane and I have been engaged for years; in fact, since we were children.

Tom. The heartless little coquette! And I thought she loved me.

Gop. No. She told me you were laboring under some such mistake, and asked me to enlighten you on the true state of the case.

Tom. (*Walking off sadly.*) I'll never believe in a woman again as long as I live. [Exit.

Gop. Bathsheba would say that I told him a lie, and if it were not for her petticoats she would probably qualify

it as a d——d lie. But, if, as in this instance, a statement is made which wavers, in a measure from strict accuracy, and the object of such equivocation is to avoid bloodshed, I contend that it rises to the dignity of diplomacy. (*Crowd cries, "Speech! speech! GOPEPPER!" etc., etc.*)

Gop. Ah! I forgot, my friends. (*Ascends the ladder. Cries of "speech! speech!" etc. Gets on top of the porch, and after much preparation addresses the crowd.*)

Friends, Countrymen, Romans:

When the red right hand of a hellish tyranny is grasping at the throat of our cherished independence, and strangling with its noisome breath the pillars of a nation's virtue, are we, I ask, to bow the suppliant knee of a shackled and depraved bondsman, lost to every sense of shame and honor, at the imperial dictation of a bloated and scrofulous aristocracy? Or, are we to become the effeminate and besotted parasites of a tainted and hireling hereditary republicanism, festering in the throes of its expiring corruption? Are we? Fellow-citizens! The American eagle is already proudly shrieking its death rattle from the sky-piercing summits and impenetrable fastnesses of the voiceless desert. The American eagle is already weeping in blood-stained tears for its native freedom, while you, gentlemen, you, as it were, fellow-citizens, you, my friends, you, are serene! (*During the delivery of this speech, gagged and altered to suit the audience, the ladder is withdrawn, and the crowd leave the speaker alone.*) Hallo! All gone! The ignorant boobies! They have not been educated up to appreciate eloquence. Whenever a person tries to instruct the masses, and elevate them from the depths of their mental and moral depravity, they treat him with disrespect and mob him. They have taken the ladder away and I don't know how to get down.

Enter ADAM from the house.

What is the matter with him? He don't seem happy.

Adam. Does love always convert its victims into driveling idiots? But an hour ago I was wild with joy, and

now I am crazy with vexation. Who is this Manners that he should cross me with his impertinent assurance? He acts as if 'twas he whom Dido loved instead of me. Yet he is not to blame. Dido has not told him of my wooing; of course she has not. (*Laughing.*) Jealousy is making a greater ass of me than I was before; but should Wiley Manners, or any other man, come between me and the woman I love, I would clutch him by the throat, and throttle him, as though he were a rabid dog.

Gop. He's getting dangerous. I guess I had better remain quiet for a while.

Adam. The doubts with which a lover is be-deviled are worse than the eternal torments of the damned. I try to persuade myself that I do not doubt, but I can not deceive myself with a lie. I *do* doubt this girl returns my love, and I would try to crush out my passion, but 'twould be useless. I could not do it now. I could not do it now. (*Sits down on the porch.*) I will sit here until she comes, and say good-by, if my tongue will let me.

Gop. I hope she will come out soon. My situation is growing uncomfortable. (*TOM and JANE emerge from the house, equipped for traveling. They are obliged to part in order to pass Adam.*)

Tom. Adam, are you bilious?

Adam. Yes.

Tom. Take a stiff horn of salt and water. That's what they always give me, and it's sure to fetch it.

Jane. Poor, dear brother. Don't sit here, Adam.

Adam. Go away.

Jane. Everybody is cross to me this morning. (*Sighs.*) Even Tom appears to be avoiding me now.

Tom. Scat! (*Throws a stone at GOPEPPER, which he dodges.*)

Gop. Be careful how you throw up here. You might break a window.

Adam. (*Muttering.*) She is coming. I hear her laugh. The Senator is entertaining. (*MANNERS and DIDO, equipped for traveling, emerge from the house, followed by MRS. GUDGEON.*)

Mrs. G. Good-by, dear. God bless you. (*MANNERS*

with DIDO on his arm tries to pass ADAM, who is still sitting. ADAM rises very slowly, and is rudely pushed by MANNERS.)

Man. Get out of the way, fellow. (*ADAM turns sharply around, and in the heat of passion violently strikes MANNERS.*)

Adam. Fellow! (*MRS. GUDGEON takes ADAM by the arm, and DIDO takes hold of MANNERS, who has assumed a threatening attitude.*)

Mrs. G. Why, Adam! (*Tableau. Curtain drops.*)

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Ante-Room in DALRYMPLE'S house, with doors opening into Drawing-Room in rear. FITZGORY and MISS JYNKYNS sitting.*

Fitz. We have had a splendid feed. The Dalrymples live in royal style.

Miss J. Yes; but we must really cut them. They have insulted us by bringing us in contact with these country barbarians.

Fitz. Perfect heathens! Eat with their knives; and this fellow they call Adam Gudgeon actually drank out of his finger glass.

Miss J. Didn't it make you sick on the stomach?

Fitz. My stomach couldn't afford it after such a magnificent dinner, though I had to call for brandy.

Enter DIDO, JANE and ADAM.

Dido. Oh, here is Miss Jynkyns and Mr. Fitzgory. As none of you people seem inclined to dance, I'll leave you to entertain each other.

Fitz. Oh, don't! I beg of you.

Dido. I'm sure I don't know what to do with you. I dislike leaving you alone, but I must go to the ball-room.

Jane. It would be cruelty to leave us here.

Enter MANNERS, DALRYMPLE and TOM.

Man. Ah, Gudgeon! I received your note of apology, and was only too happy on finding an excuse to overlook your rudeness when we were last together.

Adam. You are a nobleman, sir; and I am ashamed my

childish temper should have led me into such a silly outbreak. (*They retire up the stage.*)

Dido. Tom, you take Jane and teach her how to waltz.

Tom. Does the request come from Miss Gudgeon herself?

Jane. Tell Mr. Dalrymple that it does not.

Dido. What is the matter with you two high-toned goslings? I thought you were in love with each other.

Jane. Oh, for shame, Dido.

Tom. Miss Gudgeon seems surprised at the very thought of such an absurdity.

Jane. (*Unnaturally.*) Yes, I'm sure the idea never entered our heads.

Dido. You have been quarreling; don't deny it.

Jane. (*Restraining her tears.*) I wish, I wish I was at home.

Tom. With Gopepper?

Jane. I have the headache, and am going to my room. [*Exit.*]

Tom. Under such circumstances, the proper thing for me to do will be to get tight. [*Exit.*]

Dido. (*Laughing.*) She is driving him to desperation. Poor Tom! he is now ready to pronounce life a hollow mockery.

Dal. (*To ADAM.*) Have you found any business opening to suit you yet?

Adam. No.

Man. Why do you not try politics? Your talents entitle you to a seat in Congress.

Adam. I have no taste for politics. I would soon grow weary of being praised for virtues I never possessed and damned for vices of which I am innocent.

Dal. Adam is eminently fitted for a clerical life. I can indorse his praying qualifications.

Dido. Yes, and his cheerful manners would soon make him the rage—for funeral services.

Adam. I can not assume a gayety that I do not feel.

Dido. A great drawback to your success in any capacity is your solemn sincerity. You are too dreadfully in earnest to enjoy yourself.

Adam. My enjoyment will come when my hopes are realized.

Dido. You must learn to enjoy yourself to-day; to live now. If you postpone the pursuit of pleasure until you get rich, or get married, or get some other *ignis fatuus*, you will never know what enjoyment is.

Adam. I can be happy any where with you.

Dido. You don't mean it? now, really.

Adam. Are you never sad?

Dido. Yes (*with a mock sigh*), when you are absent.

Adam. Only then?

Dido. Only then, and when—you are present; come with me to the drawing room.

Adam. One moment. Mr. Dalrymple, here is a package containing ten thousand dollars, which I have just received as the first payment on the sale of my farm. You have a safe in the house; will you take care of it for me?

Dal. (*Takes package and puts it in his pocket.*) Certainly.

Adam. Count it.

Dal. Never mind. It is sealed and will be safe.

Adam. Now I am ready. [*Exit ADAM and DIDO.*]

Dal. (*Yawning.*) I drank too much wine at dinner. You will excuse me. (*Sits in a chair.*)

Man. Of course. I'll go to the drawing-room. [*Exit.*]

Fitz. Devilish impolite; going asleep while we are here.

Miss J. I am afraid the Dalrymples are as vulgar as their guests. He will be snoring next. This is the last time I demean myself by visiting such trash.

(*FITZGORY and MISS JYNKYNS retire to the drawing-room, leaving DALRYMPLE alone. MANNERS enters and peers stealthily around the room and places his head to DALRYMPLE'S breast.*)

Man. Mr. Dalrymple? oh, Mr. Dalrymple! Umph! he is asleep. Ten thousand dollars will ease me up for a year to come; no one would ever suspect me, the Christian statesman, of taking it. (*Places his hand in DALRYMPLE'S pocket, but hastily withdraws it.*) What was that? Pshaw, nothing! A thief hears a watchman's rattle in the gnaw-

ing of a mouse. I must have this money. I need it, and it would be flying in the face of Providence not to avail myself of such an easy way to get it. (*He takes the package carefully from DALRYMPLE'S pocket, removes the seal with a penknife, opens it, abstracts the money, substitutes old paper, closes the envelope, warms the seals by a candle and replaces them, then puts the package back in DALRYMPLE'S pocket.*) This is a new business to me, but I think I am equal to it; what shall I do with the money for the present? It will not do to let it remain on my person, as it might place me in an awkward position should the ruffianly owner discover his loss and insist on a general search. (*Goes to a small table with Bible on it.*) Here is a Bible; it will be secure here until it is prudent to remove it. I can make my usual call to-morrow, and withdraw the deposit. (*Places the money in the Bible and fastens the clasp.*) Brilliantly conceived and skillfully executed. Some one is coming.

(*Enter GOPEPPER.*)

Ah, Columbus! glad to see you.

Gop. At your old tricks, I see.

Man. (*Excitedly.*) Eh! what?

Gop. At your old tricks.

Man. (*Nervously.*) What the devil do you mean?

Gop. Fingering at that Bible.

Man. Well, what of it?

Gop. What were you doing with it?

Man. Reading it.

Gop. Disciple of Ananias, you are up to some game.

Man. Sir, what kind of game?

Gop. Why pretending to be religious, you know; but the old codger is fast asleep, and your piety is lost on him. (*Laughing immoderately.*)

Man. So he is. I *was* trying to deceive him.

Gop. Is the old file tight?

Man. Only a little overtaken.

Gop. I am as dry as a powder-horn myself. Can a fellow get anything to drink here?

Man. Oh, yes; pull that bell.

Gop. (*Pulls the bell.*) I have been electioneering around the bar-rooms, and ate too much chipped codfish.

Enter SERVANT.

Gop. Sardanapalus, bring us some brandy and water, separate. [*Exit SERVANT.*]

Man. I see you are no baby in your tippie.

Gop. Baby! I was nursed from a bottle and weaned on milk punch.

Enter SERVANT with decanter and glasses and places them on a small table.

Servant. Anything else, sir?

Gop. Not at present. As a free-born American citizen of probable foreign extraction, I will not insult your spirit of independence by attempting to discharge the obligation I am under with a base pecuniary return. My gratitude is much too deep for financial utterance, but you may retire with every assurance of my most sincere regard.

Serv. Fine words butter no parsnips, sir.

Gop. In that case whenever you find your system requires parsnips, you can prepare them in the shape of fritters, and use lard. (*Sits on one chair and places his feet on another. Servant lifts his feet off, places a napkin on the chair and puts his feet on it.*) Thank you, bring me another rag for the chair I'm sitting on. [*Exit SERVANT.*]

Now that we're alone, let us forget the harassing cares and distracting turmoil of the outside world, and indulge in a quiet, fashionable and judicious drunk.

Man. I never drink. You are acquainted here and can get along until I return. [*Exit.*]

Gop. Oh, certainly. A smart man and a clever one; takes a great interest in me; promised to get me something soft when Congress meets; don't expect any return except for me to electioneer for his friends. Like all truly great and good men, Manners never drinks, smokes, or chews. I do; and am serving my apprenticeship to fame by getting drunk with the masses. He finds the money but I

furnish the brains. The difficulty with my duties is their mixed character. If Dutchmen drank whisky or Irishmen drank beer, the merit of my labor would vanish. It is the power to endure the constant and rapid alternation of the Hibernian nectar with the Teutonic elixir, that demonstrates the *man*. Eh! why here comes Jane, the guiding star of my life.

Enter JANE.

Why, darling!

Jane. Stop, Mr. Gopepper; you presume too much on our acquaintance. What right have you to be calling me dear and darling?

Gop. Why I used to carry you around in my arms when you were an infant.

Jane. Then call me Jane; plain Jane.

Gop. Make it pretty Jane; plain Jane would be a lie.

Jane. You don't mind that, do you?

Gop. Jane, I adore you.

Jane. I don't adore you though, and wish you to stop addressing me in such a loving manner.

Gop. Because I have driven this tadpole of a Dalrymple from you.

Jane. (*Aside.*) I wonder if this is true. Can Tom think there is anything between me and this dolt? (*Aloud.*) I don't thank you one bit for driving him from me.

Gop. Now don't be angry with me, darling.

Jane. If you do not stop it, I'll tell Adam to make you; so there now.

Enter DIDO, ADAM, TOM, FITZGORY and Ladies.

Dido. Let us clear this room, and we will give these rustics a dancing lesson. (*Calling*) Papa, wake up! (*Draws the feather end of her fan under his nose.*)

Dal. (*In his sleep.*) I am on the edge of the bed already.

Dido. Now I wonder who he thinks is sleeping with him?

Gop. That would be hard to tell while the old gentleman has such a loose way of going to bed.

Dido. He is always loose when he is tight. (*Tickles DALRYMPLE again.*)

Dal. (*Slapping his face.*) A bug, by Jove.

Dido. A potato bug; destroys them with gravy. He will take me for a daddy-long-legs this time. (*Tickles DALRYMPLE again.*)

Gop. Hardly; judging from your build.

Dal. (*Rising from his sleep and roaring very loud.*) Why the devil don't you have this bed overhauled?

Dido. Papa, I am ashamed of you.

Dal. Why did you wake me up?

Dido. We wish to dance. Help us move the furniture.

Adam. I can do that alone. (*Clears a space for dancing.*)

Dido. (*Aside to Jane.*) What am I to do with your brother? He follows me around like a pet lamb, and is too innocent to perceive how excessively irksome his attentions are becoming.

Jane. Desperate cases require desperate remedies—Marry him.

Dido. That might answer with some men, but it would make him more attentive than ever.

Jane. He thinks because you once promised to marry him, that you are as much in love as he is.

Dido. But I am not.

Jane. Then tell him so.

Dido. I am afraid of him.

Jane. You need not be. Adam is terrible in his anger with men, but with ladies he never forgets he is a gentleman.

Dido. I had no idea I was losing such an inestimable treasure.

Jane. You are a light-hearted creature.

Dido. You are a shallow fool.

Jane. Reserve your pet names for your victims.

Dido. Forgive me. Can you not see that I am tormented to distraction.

Jane. Perhaps you have failed in an attempted conquest, to-night.

Dido. Oh! I am stifling.

Jane. You are unwell, Dido.

Dido. No, no. It will pass in a moment. Leave me.

Jane. Adam shall annoy you no longer, as I will tell him to-morrow how disagreeable his attentions are to you. (*Walks off*)

Dido. She believes her brother has grown troublesome to me; and yet, disguise it as I may, I love him. When I think of *him* and remember that Manners is my husband, I feel as if I were being suffocated by some horrid incubus. It is over now, and I will resume the mask of gayety, if my heart breaks in the effort. (*With an effort.*) Well, what shall we dance?

Fitz. The German.

Gop. The *Spanish* would show your graceful figure off better.

Fitz. The Spanish is some primitive country dance, no doubt.

Gop. Yes. Your partner takes you by the scruff of the neck with one hand, and the slack of your breeches with the other, and *chassees* you to the door.

Fitz. No lady would do that with me, sir. No lady would dare to trifle in that manner with a Fitzgory.

Gop. Let us have an old fashioned country breakdown. What do you say to a Virginia Reel?

Dido. The Virginia Reel by all means. Take your partners. Tom, you dance with Jane.

Gop. (*Forestalling Tom.*) Miss Gudgeon, will you honor me.

Jane. (*Snappishly.*) No.

Tom. May I have the pleasure of dancing with you?

Jane. Will it be a pleasure to you, Tom?

Tom. My happiness will amount to positive delirium.

Jane. Don't make fun of me, please; there. (*Gives him her hand.*)

(*The company form for the Virginia Reel. ADAM and DIDO, TOM and JANE, and DALRYMPLE, FITZGORY and GOPEPFER, with other ladies.*)

Dal. I feel like a wilted cabbage among so many fresh young morning glories.

Gop. Morning glories bloom in daytime, and wither at night; now, these ladies bloom at night, and—

Tom. Wither in daytime.

Gop. Correct.

Dal. That would have been called impudence in my day. I suppose in our present advanced stage of civilization it passes for wit.

Dido. (*Sighing.*) Ah me! gentlemen are not what they used to be, papa.

(*Band plays and the company dance the Virginia Reel.*)

Dal. Well, good-night. I have had enough. [*Exit.*

Dido. (*Laughing.*) Good gracious! he will kill me.

Jane. Who?

Dido. That Fitzgory. He dances like a toy harlequin with the string broken.

Jane. He seems well pleased with his own performance at any rate.

Dido. Scientific people say the face and head are indicative of character, but I would rather trust the other extremity for my index. Now, who would expect a manly emotion from the possessor of such a set of feet and legs?

Adam. The shot went home. You are whipping me over another's shoulders.

Dido. You silly incarnation of sensitiveness, I never even thought of you.

Adam. I fear the occasions when you do think of me are very rare.

Tom. (*Aside.*) I guess I appeared unconcerned enough to let that demure little minx know that I could get along for a while yet; she tried her best to put me on the string again, too.

Jane. (*Aside.*) Tom is thawing out. If we dance another set together, I can bring him to his knees again. (*Aloud.*) Let us form another set.

Dido. (*Yawning.*) Let it be something more entertaining then. These country confloptions are too tame.

Gop. What do you say to the Can-Can?

Dido. Too energetic. Give me the waltz! The love-inspiring, wicked waltz. I love its dizzy whirl and naughty sociability. I love to die away in its enchanting maze to

the soft and dreamy music of Strauss and Weber. I love the divine ecstasy of being clasped by some handsome fellow's strong and willing arm. I love to realize that I am creating a sensation in his manly bosom when I lay my head upon his vest; and oh! what a ravishing intoxication it is to know that it is wrong, and I ought not to do it.

Gop. Stop! enchantress! stop! You have struck the right chord. Here is my arm, and here my vest. Come.

Adam. Sir, this is insolence!

Dido. (*Laughing.*) Well, I have put some life in two of you. Now, who will waltz?

Tom. Will you, Jane?

Jane. May I, brother?

Adam. No.

Jane. (*Aside.*) Let us go to the drawing-room, where he can not see us. [*Exit TOM and JANE.*]

Dido. I would ask you to waltz with me, Mr. Gudgeon, but you are too awkward.

Adam. Were I to waltz with you, I might forget myself and be more awkward still.

Enter MANNERS.

Dido. Then, Manners, you must be my partner.

Man. I am honored. (*Advances and takes DIDO in position for waltzing. ADAM crosses and removes his arm from her waist.*)

Man. What do you mean by this impertinence?

Adam. Since Miss Dalrymple has no respect for herself, I will teach you to have some for her.

Dido. What right have you to exercise a censorship over my conduct?

Adam. I will allow no such liberty with a lady who is to be my wife.

Man. You claim under a short title. Miss Dido is engaged to me.

Fitz. You both soar too high, and will have to wait till she becomes the Widow Fitzgory. She is engaged to me.

Dido. I admit the impeachment in regard to you, Mr. Gudgeon, but was under the impression I had rejected Mr. Fitzgory's suit.

Man. Are there any more to share the honor with me?

Adam. As honor appears to be out of the question, I withdraw from the contest. A woman so slack in her moral perceptions is not apt to be as physically exclusive as would become my wife.

Man. (*Drawing off his glove.*) Are you aware of the responsibility a gentleman assumes in insulting a lady? (*Aside to FITZGORY.*) Lend me a pistol, Fitz.

Adam. I reserve my answer until a gentleman asks the question.

Man. (*Throwing the glove in ADAM'S face.*) You shall have a chance to modify that reply, and if you attempt any of your brutality, I will blow your brains out. (*FITZGORY hands MANNERS a pistol, which he cocks and points at ADAM, who is advancing in a threatening manner.*)

Dido. Senator Manners, I place myself under your care, and expect you to protect me from this man's violence.

Adam. Your apprehension is assumed. I would not do you an injury, and you know it.

Fitz. (*Coming between them*) You have nothing to fear. He is perfectly harmless when men are about.

Adam. Men! Is this thing a man? Could the Almighty have made such a mistake with his own image? No, Miss Dido, it is the constant contact with such scum as this, that has dimmed your moral vision, and clouded the purity of your soul.

Fitz. Scum! A Fitzgory! Scum! Do you know, sir, how I resent an insult?

Adam. No. Nor care.

Fitz. I wipe it out with the heart's blood of the villain who offers it.

Adam. You lie! You suffer it like any other coward. Out of my way. (*Takes FITZGORY by the collar and throws him violently aside.*)

Dido. Mr. Gudgeon, after such an outrage on our hospitality, I must request you to withdraw.

Adam. I beg your pardon. I had forgotten where I was. My temper has gained the advantage of me again.

Dido. Leave this house, sir!

Adam. Leave your house? (*Sinks in a chair bewildered.*)

Dido. Yes; leave my house. I trust you will not make it necessary for the servants to remove you. (*Aside to MANNERS.*) Give me the ring you took from my finger when you gave me this one.

Man. What do you wish to do with it?

Dido. It was his; and I can break with him now. Heaven pity him and me!

Man. (*Looking at his finger.*) Eh! it is gone! What could have become of it?

Dido. Never mind it. He is miserable enough already.

[*Exeunt all but ADAM and FITZGORY.*]

Adam. (*Takes a locket from his pocket.*) Here is her picture. I can not look at so fair a face and believe it conceals so vile a heart. (*Drops the picture on the floor and grinds it under his heel.*) There, it is all over. All doubt is ended now. All hope is gone, and I am alone.

Fitz. (*Producing two pocket pistols.*) No, not alone!

Adam. Well, I would be alone. Leave me.

Fitz. You do not know me, sir.

Adam. I do not wish to.

Fitz. I demand satisfaction for the insult you have offered me.

Adam. You shall have it!

Fitz. When? Where? How?

Adam. Here! Now! As you please!

Fitz. We must have witnesses.

Adam. I require none.

Fitz. But I am a dead shot.

Adam. So much the better.

Fitz. I will accept your apology.

Adam. I have none to offer.

Fitz. I shall kill you.

Adam. I am glad of it.

Fitz. This unconcern is unprecedented.

Adam. (*Snatching one of the pistols.*) Take your position!

Fitz. But you might kill me.

Adam. I am a poor shot.

Fitz. You might hit me by accident.

Adam. If I understand you right, you expect to fight a duel without risking your pitiful life.

Fitz. I do not intend to be murdered.

Adam. (*Throwing away the pistol and laughing wildly.*) You d——d blood-thirsty pirate! Here, shoot me! Your honor demands my life; take it!

Fitz. I will have a friend call on you to arrange preliminaries. [*Exit hastily.*]

Adam. Chivalry! honor! love! mere by-words. Death! there is some meaning in that, and I will learn it. Poor mother! 'twill be a corner in an awful fireside that I can give you to-morrow. (*Takes off his coat, rolls up his shirt-sleeve to the shoulder, takes a pen-knife from his pocket and opens it.*) The point is keen. Now to find an artery. (*Feels along his arm, when DIDO, DALRYMPLE, FITZGORY and MANNERS enter.*)

Dal. My daughter has told me of your intemperate behavior, and I have come to return your money.

Adam. You can keep it, sir, to buy her wedding garments.

Dal. Take it. (*ADAM takes the package, tears it open, throws the package one way and its contents another.*)

Adam. Here, ye wolves, stoop for it.

Dal. (*Picks up the contents.*) Why, this is not money; it is nothing but waste paper.

Adam. Not money! When I gave you the envelope there were ten thousand dollars of as good money in it as ever bought a woman's virtue.

Dal. There is no sign of them here now.

Adam. Have I fallen among thieves? Well, let it go. I will pay as much at any time to be saved from a wanton woman.

Dal. You drunken scoundrel! If you utter another insulting word, I'll have you pitched headlong into the street.

Dido. He is not drunk, papa. (*Aside.*) What have I done? His only sin was his excess of love for me, and I have stung a hand that would have cherished me.

Dal. You never gave me any money, and you know it.

Adam. You mean I lie? Your hairs are gray, sir, and they protect you. I gave you ten thousand dollars, and if either of these lusty carpet knights dare, by but a shrug or whisper, intimate that my words are false, I'll uncover his sheep's pluck for dogs to feed and sicken on.

Man. (*Sneering.*) After such a masterly effort to establish a character, no one would distrust any assertion he might make.

Dido. He has shown himself a man whose love is above the thought of gold, and I will believe him honest. There is some mystery about this package that we do not understand.

Adam. False one, I have lost you, and am indifferent about all else. Let the filthy stuff go to curse the hand that took it. It will not be needed where I am journeying. (*Drives the knife into his arm and draws the sleeve down.*)

Man. He has cut an artery.

Dal. We must bind up the wound before he bleeds to death. (*DALRYMPLE, MANNERS and FITZGORY take hold of ADAM, who shakes them off and raises the knife.*)

Adam. Hands off! unless you wish to follow me to the great hereafter. (*ADAM shuts the doors leading to the drawing-room; drags an arm-chair against them; sits down, and gradually becomes faint from supposed loss of blood.*)

Adam. The tide is ebbing, ebbing, ebbing! When I am dead, give my body to the doctors. Let them show these scoffers a man's heart that could throb for love as well as for life. They may find that mine is broken, but it will serve better than none to further the cause of science.

Dal. He is a strong and determined rascal, but I should judge we could handle him now.

Dido. Let me take care of him while you run for a physician.

Fitz. I'll go.

[*Exit.*

Dal. You remain with my daughter, Manners, and I will summon help.

[*Exit.*

(*DIDO takes a scarf from her shoulder and crosses to*

ADAM. *After some feeble resistance she binds it around his arm, as he sinks back from exhaustion.*)

Dido. Oh, Adam! you must not die. Let me save you. Think of your kind old mother. Live for her sake. Adam, look up; look at me. Adam, do not die. 'Tis I, Dido calls. Adam, I have something to tell you; do you hear me? Adam, live for me. I love you, darling. I never knew till now how I did love you. (ADAM *slightly raises his head, stares stonily at her, and falls back again.*) He lives! He can be saved! A physician! Quick!

Man. (*Glancing at her.*) I think you will promote our future happiness by removing your scarf and letting him die.

Dido. My God! I forgot that I was a married woman. (*Tableau.*)

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A breakfast room at DALRYMPLE'S. GOPEPPER discovered seated.*

Gop. I once heard a tradition of a fellow who disliked his mother-in-law. Why, I would rather tackle a whole army of them than one such brother-in-law as I am about to take to my bosom; that is, if I marry Jane. When I reflect on her brother's temper, I am almost led to abandon my mad pursuit of her. A lummax capable of converting a gentleman's drawing-room into a slaughter house would not be a desirable kinsman to a person of my orderly habits. No man with a decent regard for the feelings and carpets of another would attempt to bleed himself to death in that other's parlor. Now whenever I experience any tendency to suicidal phlebotomy, I shall carry a wash-tub out in the back yard, and conduct the operation in a more calm and dignified manner. Mr. and Mrs. Manners might have avoided this row if they had informed Adam of the relation they bear to each other. The miserable dupe was not aware he was raising a fuss about a married woman; at least as married as my testimony will marry her—the ceremony having been performed under my very eyes.

Bath. (*Calling without.*) Columbus! Oh, Columbus!

Gop. That was my sister's voice. Mrs. Gudgeon must have arrived. Mother!—that is Jane's mother—I come.
[*Exit.*

Enter TOM.

Tom. I wonder if every attack of calico on the brain affects all of a fellow's five senses. It seems as if I was eternally to see Jane, hear Jane, feel Jane, smell Jane and eat Jane. Wherever I go, and whatever I do, her gen-

the spirit diffuses a sweet and generous glow over my soul, like warm molasses over a pancake. A woman is like a dog; if she thinks you are afraid of her she will always be nagging at you, but when you once show her you are the master, she will fetch and carry at your bidding. It is too bad that Mrs. Gudgeon should come to take Jane away at the very moment she was ready to renounce Gopepper. My pretended indifference has been too much for her, and she sent me word to meet her in this room. Pshaw! here comes the Gopepper family with her. I'll sit here until they leave. (*Sits in an easy high-backed chair which conceals him from view.*)

Enter JANE, BATHSHEBA and GOPEPPER.

Bath. As Adam is able to travel, I hope your mother will start back right away. Everything is too grand for me in this house.

Gop. Perhaps you'd feel more at home in the kitchen.

Bath. I would; and ain't too proud to say it either.

Enter SERVANT with tray, containing decanter, glasses, etc.

Bath. What is that?

Serv. Wine and cake for Mr. Gudgeon.

Gop. Leave them.

[*Exit SERVANT.*

Bath. Wine and cake! Nice food for a sick man. I brought some fresh victuals in from the farm for Adam, and if I can find the way to the kitchen, I'll cook them for him.

[*Exit.*

Jane. What did she bring?

Gop. Spring chickens and asparagus.

Jane. I can't swallow that.

Gop. Which—the chickens or the asparagus?

Jane. Neither.

Gop. Why not? (*Takes a biscuit from the tray and eats it.*)

Jane. Too tough. I never heard of spring chickens in March.

Gop. But I saw them. (*Pours out wine and drinks it.*)

Jane. What a wicked story. Where could she get them?

Gop. They were raised in a hot-house.

Jane. That house will be cool compared to the one you will get to, if you don't quit telling such falsehoods.

Gop. With you, Jane, I could be happy even there. Jane, hear me! (*Falls on his knees. JANE pushes him over.*)

Jane. Do you think we would know each other there?

Gop. If I did not I would not care about getting there. Jane, hear me!

Jane. You got that far before; now have it out before you ruin your trowsers.

Gop. It is a heavy strain on them, but I would gladly sacrifice them on the altar of love; in fact, I will place my entire wardrobe at your disposal, for one of your sweet smiles.

Jane. I wouldn't be so reckless with my clothes.

Gop. Jane, you love Tom, and he has thrown you. Marry me out of spite.

Jane. I won't.

Gop. Then I shall propose to Dido. (*Takes another glass of wine.*)

Jane. She will make you a good wife.

Gop. So! so!

Jane. She is handsome.

Gop. Clothes! Now you do not require any artificial aid to make you beautiful.

Jane. Oh, yes I do.

Gop. But she is not the whole-souled style of creature that you are.

Jane. You might have her half-soled every now and then.

Gop. Tom told me to beware of you; that you were a confirmed flirt.

Jane. He didn't.

Gop. I'll swear to it. (*Eating another biscuit.*)

Tom. (*Aside.*) What an unhealthy liar!

Jane. You should have resented the insult.

Gop. I did. You should have seen me. My eye

flashed, my nostrils dilated, my bosom heaved, and my manly form shook and quivered like a mighty oak in a tempest.

Jane. Did your ears flop?

Gop. Jane, do not wring my heart-strings thus. Your indifference is assumed; it can not be real. Jane, I swear by the bright empyrean above, that if you will be mine I will consecrate my young and budding life to you. I am ambitious, and when, nerved by your approving smile, I shall become great, famous, I shall elevate you from the kitchen to the throne.

Jane. The kitchen!

Gop. As it were. (*Pours wine and drinks it.*)

Jane. Oh! as it were.

Gop. I am lonely now—so lonely; and in the silent watches of the night I often weep the bitter tears of solitude. But with you, Jane; you to comfort me; you to soothe my troubled spirit to rest; you to murmur the soft accents of love into my willing ear——

Jane. Take another drink.

Gop. Thank you. (*Drinks.*) You to welcome me when, tired and weary of a selfish world, I seek our humble home; you to press my aching head to your gentle bosom; you to fan my fevered brow with your fragrant breath; with you, Jane, I could move the universe. (*Eats another biscuit.*)

Jane. You appear to have a good appetite. Now, while you are busy moving the universe, who is to keep your family in corned-beef and cabbage?

Gop. Do not be sordid, Jane. For the last time, will you marry me?

Jane. For the last time, No! If every hair in your head was a diamond, and every tooth a pearl, I would not marry you.

Gop. Then Tom dies! Were a lion to cross my path I would strangle him, but as it is only a popinjay, I will wring his neck. (*Turns to go out but is confronted by TOM.*) Ah! ha!

Tom. Oh! ho! What do you do with your dead?

Gop. I have been sending them to the menagerie to fatten buzzards.

Tom. I ought to give you a good thrashing.

Gop. A whipping would not help the matter now. I feel already like a chicken trying to crow after his head is cut off.

Jane. Tom ought to whip you anyhow; and if he can't do it alone I will help him.

Gop. 'Tis a boon I would have asked. A flogging from you would not only be a source of pleasure, but would go far towards making me a better man. Hit me, Jane.

Tom. No; the inducement for him to sin was so great that we must forgive him.

Jane. Oh, Tom! }
Tom. Oh, Jane! } (*They embrace.*)

Gop. You can now resume those pleasant osculatory performances which characterized the incipient stage of your passion; while Gopepper, the heart-broken Gopepper, will fly from the haunts of men, and in some sequestered shade, beside a purling brook——

Tom. Will sit on his hind legs and howl.

Gop. (*Pouring wine and drinking.*) Jane, when I am gone, you must visit my grave, and water the daisies with your tears. [*Exit.*

Tom. He will make a precious scamp in time, if he has luck and don't get any backsets.

Jane. You won't believe his stories again, will you, Tom?

Tom. Let us get married right away, and then it won't make any difference what I believe.

Jane. Mother won't let me.

Tom. Neither would father, if I were to ask him; but we can get married first, and ask them afterward.

Jane. What! elope?

Tom. Why, yes!

Jane. When?

Tom. Right now.

Jane. I'm afraid.

Tom. With me?

Jane. Can we find any one to marry us?

Tom. There is a preacher around the corner who has

just returned from California, and as he don't know how old we are, he will be glad to get the job.

Jane. There won't be any flaw about it?

Tom. If you haven't confidence in me, say so, and I will drop the subject forever.

Jane. I will go; but I'll be ashamed to look mamma in the face again. [*Exit TOM and JANE.*]

SCENE II.—*Same apartment as in Act II.*

Enter DIDO, DALRYMPLE and GOPEPPER.

Dal. How is your patient, Mr. Gopepper?

Gop. Better.

Dido. When did you leave him?

Gop. Just now.

Dido. And you think him out of danger?

Gop. Nothing ails him now but what can be cured with a beefsteak.

Dal. See that he gets it; feed him; pamper him; do anything to get him out of the house—and speedily.

[*Exit GOPEPPER.*]

Dido. Why, father!

Dal. I would be rid of the fool.

Dido. Do not get angry; he will leave soon enough.

Dal. And have me indicted for stealing his money.

Dido. No, papa; he will not do that.

Dal. Do you really love this brawling clown?

Dido. Yes.

Dal. I can not comprehend how a lady, raised in refinement, can sympathize with such a ruffian, much less love him. His sole purpose in life seems to be knocking people down and putting up bogus money envelopes. Why don't you marry Manners? He is a gentleman.

Dido. (*Startled.*) Manners makes too much pretension to morality for a politician, and so is a rascal.

Dal. This other fellow is a thief. He knew there was no money in that package when he gave it to me.

Dido. Were you in this room long after he gave it to you?

Dal. I do not know. I fell asleep.

Enter MANNERS and GOPEPPER.

Dido. Do you remember seeing any one enter?

Dal. My recollection is very vague. I confess having drank too much and feeling a little fuddled.

Dido. (*To MANNERS.*) When you entered the room, you found Mr. Fitzgory here.

Man. (*Eagerly.*) I am sure of it.

Enter FITZGORY.

Fitz. Ah! Miss Dido, I am glad to see you looking so well.

Dido. No compliments now, please. Senator Manners says you were in this room with papa when Mr. Gudgeon's money was in his possession.

Fitz. Does Senator Manners mean to insinuate —

Dido. He does not. Will you swear on this Bible that you know nothing about the matter?

Fitz. This is an affront that Senator Manners shall answer for.

Dido. Will you swear, to please me?

Fitz. To please you? Certainly. (*Kisses the book.*) I swear.

Dido. Thank you. Mr. Gopepper, will you swear you never saw the money?

Gop. Yes; I'll swear to anything.

Dido. Do so then.

Gop. I swear. (*Kisses the book. As he leaves the table ADAM enters unnoticed, without a coat, very pale and emaciated, and rests his hand on the Bible to support himself.*)

Dido. It is your turn now, Senator.

Man. Pshaw! ridiculous!

Dido. Will you swear that you have neither knowledge nor theory in regard to this mystery?

Man. It would be absurd.

Dido. Will you swear?

Man. An idle farce ; but to please you.

Dido. Swear ; 'tis my pleasure.

Man. I swear. (*Turns to the Bible and sees ADAM.*)
Good heavens ! Are the dead to witness this mummary ?

Adam. Not dead ; but weak, weak !

Man. I wish the book. (*ADAM removes his hand, staggers from weakness but catches himself on the table. MANNERS kisses the book in great perturbation.*) Are you satisfied ?

Dido. Yes ! yes ! enough !

Man. (*Aside.*) Damn the fellow ! I won't be able to get the money out until he goes away now. [*Exit.*

Dal. What are you doing out of bed ?

Adam. Will you please have my hat and coat brought to me ?

Dal. What do you want with them ?

Adam. I am going home.

Dal. You will never live to get there if you start in your present condition.

Adam. The risk is mine.

Dal. Be it so. You can go to the devil if you like. [*Exit angrily.*

Gop. (*To FITZ.*) I don't think we are wanted here.

Fitz. I want to tell this fellow my opinion of him.

Adam. (*Fiercely.*) Sir !

Gop. We had better leave. I hardly think he would sleep at night if he knew your opinion of him.

[*Exit GOPEPPER and FITZGORY.*

Enter SERVANT bringing the same coat DALRYMPLE wore in Act II.

Serv. Your own coat can not be found, but master sends you this one with his compliments, sir, and hopes that you will put it on and be damned. [*Exit.*

Adam. (*Putting on the coat.*) I am obliged to your master.

Dido. You are faint. Will you not sit down ?

Adam. Yes, until they bring my hat.

Dido. You surely are not mad enough to leave us at present ?

Adam. Last night you ordered me to quit your house. I shall not wait a second bidding.

Dido. You deserved the order.

Adam. We will not discuss that. I promised mother that I would go home with her at once.

Dido. I have never known a mother; nor a mother's love.

Adam. Then you have never known any love.

Dido. Yes; yours.

Adam. Mine was but a momentary inclination.

Dido. And even that has departed.

Adam. True; but it was worthless. Sexual love at best is but a purified lust. A man must be in his vigor to harbor it.

Dido. And you?

Adam. I am weak mentally and bodily.

Dido. You are very angry with me.

Adam. I forgive you.

Dido. Do you ever forget?

Adam. Yes.

Dido. Will you forget me?

Adam. I will try.

Dido. And the wrong I have done you?

Adam. Both.

Dido. I have merited this indifference.

Adam. You have sought it, required it, demanded it. Would you revoke it?

Dido. Others before me have thrown away what they would have back again.

Adam. (*Rising.*) Woman! look at me; see what you have made of me! You have done your work well. Why do you seek to improve on it? It is complete—I am ruined, hopelessly ruined; what more do you ask?

Dido. Were you to try, would you find it impossible to ever, ever love me again?

Adam. Would you revive a fading fancy, that you might repeat a questionable triumph?

Dido. Fading fancy! Are you capable of entertaining a mere fancy?

Adam. As capable as yourself.

Dido. And but an hour ago I thought your constancy a marvel. I thought your faith was equal to ten thousand such rebuffs as I had put upon it.

Adam. How soon our fond illusions are dispelled.

Dido. My humiliation is complete. I have acted unwomanly in seeking to regain your heart, and you spurn me. Oh, Adam! you have never suffered as I do now.
(Sobs.)

Adam. Your suffering is the result of your own frivolity.

Dido. You are mistaken; you have passed your judgment before you knew the cause of my distress.

Adam. I know enough.

Dido. You do not know I am a married woman.

Adam. Married! *You* married?

Dido. Two months ago. Senator Manners, taking advantage of an intended mock marriage, had the ceremony performed in earnest.

Adam. You, you have not been living with him as his wife?

Dido. (Shuddering.) No; he has given me a year to become reconciled to his cowardly act.

Adam. Does any one know of the cheat that has been practiced upon you?

Dido. Not even my father. I did not know it myself until after I had accepted you. I only tell you now because I need a friend, and do not know a soul in the wide world I can trust but you.

Adam. You have been persecuted by this man while I have been ungenerous enough to think that you were using me for your sport. Will you forgive my meanness now, and let me be your friend?

Dido. I was not wholly blameless.

Adam. But you were not the trifling woman I was fool enough to think you. You have atoned for all your folly in your forced relation with a husband you can not love.

Dido. I loathe him, and shudder at the thought of paying duty to him as a wife.

Adam. I promised once that I would serve you as a knight of old, and I am ready now to make the promise good.

Dido. No! no! Do not kill him yet. Your own life would pay the penalty. I will seek redress from the courts, and if they do not grant it——

Adam. Well?

Dido. Then serve me as you will.

Adam. Your husband is approaching.

Dido. I would see him alone.

Adam. Remember that your cause is mine, and that I chafe to bring our quarrel to an issue. (*ADAM goes out as MANNERS enters, and they stare as they pass each other. DIDO sits by the Bible stand, and leaning her arms on the Bible, buries her face in her hands.*)

Man. (*Aside.*) A good helpmate; standing guard over her husband's treasure. (*He walks up to her, touches her on the shoulder, and calls, "wife!" As she does not answer he touches her again, and calls louder, "wife!" DIDO looks up, shudders, and shrinks from him. He sits opposite to her at the stand. She rises and walks to another part of the room.*) She will not look at me. Very good. Like the busy bee, I will improve the shining hour to gather honey—or secure my money. (*Takes hold of the Bible and releases it again.*) Umph! She might turn around and catch me. I will wait. "Wife!!"

Dido. Hush! for mercy's sake hush!

Man. Is the title of wife so distasteful to you?

Dido. It makes my flesh creep.

Man. That's bad. You are nervous; you did not rest well last night. You were dreaming—of Gudgeon.

Dido. I was.

Man. You love Gudgeon. I became aware of the fact when you were too excited to conceal it.

Dido. I do not wish to conceal it.

Man. You are bold.

Dido. I am growing desperate.

Man. Take care. (*Waves the marriage certificate at her, and she snatches it from him.*)

Dido. I will take care of it until I can procure a divorce.

Man. Will you brave that notoriety?

Dido. I will brave shame itself to be rid of you.

(*Takes his ring from her finger and throws it at his feet.*)
There is your ring ; give me the other.

Man. I told you that I lost it.

Dido. I do not believe you.

Man. Come, darling, do not be vulgar enough to make a scene. Accept the situation and I will forgive your little *faux pas* with Gudgeon.

Dido. Curse you ! I hate you ! Do you understand ? I abhor you.

Man. Then I must exert my authority.

Dido. I defy you !

Man. Your father will sustain me.

Dido. You lie ! I will expose you to him at once. [*Exit.*

Man. Stay, darling. The devil ! I did not give her credit for so much spirit. She must not keep that paper though, or I am ruined. [*Exit.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

Enter MANNERS, who crosses to the Bible stand, sits down and opens the Bible.

Man. As the coast appears to be clear, I will try once more to recover my back salary.

Enter GOPEPPER, who sits opposite to him.

Gop. That's right, my son; search the Scriptures.

Man. (*Violently closing the book.*) My shadow again! (*Aside.*) As old Dalrymple is so delighted with the trick I played on his daughter, I have no further use for this clod poll, and will get rid of him for good. (*Aloud.*) Columbus, I have just received a letter from Washington, which may interest you. (*Aside.*) I wrote it myself. (*GOPEPPER takes the letter, spreads his arms over the stand and reads.*)

"DEAR SIR:—In reply to your favor of 10th inst., urging the claims of your friend, Mr. Gopepper, we would state that the Office of the Peace Commissioner to the Untamed Kickapoos has just been vacated by the death of the last incumbent, whose remains, with the exception of his hair, were received from the West this morning. As the salary is four hundred dollars a year, it will be a good thing for your friend, especially if he is bald, and has recently been converted."

Gop. (*Folding the letter.*) In the hour of triumph, how glorious the consciousness that we have deserved all we have ever obtained from our country. Political records may fade, and the stars grow dim with age, but the recollection of such gratitude will always be bright in the memory of a true patriot. Will you excuse me while I retire to conceal my tears, and give utterance to a little emotional profanity?

[*Exit.*

Man. Umph! Another sorehead. He will hatch out the platform for a new party before night. *Reform*, of course. (*Rising.*) Hallo! Here come our rural cousins. Having won all the tricks, I can afford to be gracious to them.

Enter ADAM, DIDO, MRS. GUDGEON and BATHSHEBA.

Mrs. G. Where is Jane? She ought to be ready now.

Bath. She has gone to her room for her hat and cloak.

Man. Going to leave? I am sorry, I declare. (*They turn their backs to him.*) A cut! A decided cut! Can I survive it?

Mrs. G. (*To* DIDO.) My child, you must not fail to visit us again this summer.

Dido. I sincerely trust I may be able.

Man. You have my consent, darling.

Adam. She will not need it. (*DIDO pours a glass of wine, and hands it to ADAM.*)

Dido. Drink; it will strengthen you.

Adam. (*Drinking.*) Here's confusion to the scurvy knave who tries to elevate himself by dragging down a woman.

Enter DALRYMPLE.

Dal. Daughter! Senator Manners has informed me of the subterfuge he employed to make you his wife, and I wish to state, before these people, that his action has my unqualified approval.

Dido. I did not expect this of you, father.

Dal. You will make immediate arrangements for a wedding reception, as I shall publish your marriage to-morrow.

Dido. You can hire some one to receive your guests then.

Dal. You shall do it yourself.

Dido. I will *not* do it.

Dal. I have never before interposed my will, when it was contrary to your own, but in this instance I insist on your obedience to your father and your husband.

Dido. I have quit my husband.

Dal. You can either return to him or quit me.

Dido. Quit you, father?

Dal. Unless you remain as the wife of the Senator.

Dido. Turned from home?

Mrs. G. Nay, Mr. Dalrymple, you can not be so harsh. The child would sin to give her person where she can not give her love.

Dal. She has been making a shuttlecock of her love long enough. I never retract my word.

Dido. (*Sobbing.*) You know you would never sleep a wink if you thought I was homeless.

Mrs. G. You shall never be homeless while I have a shelter.

Man. Are you aware of the responsibility you are assuming?

Adam. I am responsible for my mother's acts.

Dal. You have made an attempt to swindle me out of \$10,000, so I judge that to be about your price. Now, here is a check for the amount, which I will give you if you will cease to molest my daughter, and leave the country.

Adam. (*Taking the check and tearing it to pieces.*) You are not a good business man. Senator Manners will accept your proposition for half that sum.

Man. Perhaps you wouldn't mind advancing the money for my purchase yourself.

Adam. To relieve Miss Dido from your loathsome presence, I will advance it, which, together with the \$10,000 you have already stolen from me, is considerably more than you are worth.

Man. You have a singularly lively fancy.

Adam. That you are a pickpocket is not fancy; it is fact.

Dal. You are making a serious charge against my friend. Have you any grounds for your suspicion?

Adam. Miss Dido, what became of the ring I gave you?

Dido. My husband removed it from my finger and placed it on his own.

Adam. Do you know where it is now?

Dido. No; though if the Senator's story could be relied on, he lost it.

Adam. I have found it.

Man. Where?

Adam. Where you dropped it, in the pocket of Mr. Dalrymple's coat, which I am wearing; in the same pocket my money was placed before you robbed him. Here it is. (*Produces the ring from the pocket.*)

Dal. Your indictment conveys the impression that it has been manufactured expressly for the occasion, but by a party unacquainted with his business.

Man. Yes; Mr. Gudgeon is looking for an occupation, and I would recommend him to adopt the practice of law. He possesses remarkable talent for a first-class pettifogger.

Bath. I would have him arrested, Adam.

Man. My dear madam, you are prejudiced. If you will give the evidence the benefit of that legal acumen which characterizes your sex, you will perceive that it is purely circumstantial, and, even then, depends on the invalid statement of a refractory wife.

Adam. My case is hardly fledged yet, but it will grow stronger with age.

Dal. The object of this trumpery charge is too transparently malicious to merit further notice. You have refused my offer, and my daughter defies my authority. I wish it understood that when she quits my protection, she has nothing to expect from me.

Dido. Then wish me God-speed among the daughters of toil, papa. Do not let me join the army of the million with the image of your angry face before my eyes. (*Throws herself at his feet.*)

Dal. (*Spurning her and going toward the door.*) Consider well the step you are taking before you make it irrevocable.

Enter TOM, JANE and REV. WESLEY JONES, who intercept his exit.

Jones. Excuse me, sir. Does either of these young folks belong to you?

Dal. The boy is my son.

Jones. Boy! He told me he was of age.

Mrs. G. The girl is my daughter.

Jones. She also represented herself of age. They came to me to be married a few moments ago.

Bath. Jerusalem! my happy home!

Enter GOPEPPER.

Mrs. G. Why, Jane!

Gop. Jane, you surprise me!

Jane. (*Sobbing.*) I did not wish to do wrong mamma; but I have suffered dreadfully with the heartache lately, and I thought—maybe—Tom—could—cure it.

Bath. You will learn by experience that marriage produces more aches than it cures.

Dal. (*To TOM.*) I'll lock you up in your room until my house is rid of this breed of Gudgeons.

Jones. I doubted their story, but I must acknowledge the young gentleman has behaved very well, sir. When I reasoned with him on the wrong he was committing, he was quite willing that the young lady should be returned to her mother.

Gop. And to her fond Gopepper.

Tom. Look here, Mr. Gopepper, I owe you a thrashing already, and if I ever catch you cruising around Jane again, I will put a bug in your ear.

Dal. (*To JONES.*) Who are you, sir?

Jones. I am a clergyman, and my name is Wesley Jones.

Man. (*Aside.*) Wesley Jones! it is, by Jove!

Gop. Is it? Wesley, my buck, how are you?

Jones. We appear to be very intimate, but I really can not recall who you are.

Dido. He was a witness to a marriage ceremony you performed before you became so particular in regard to the age of your patrons.

Jones. I have always been particular in that respect.

Dido. Did I look so old, that you considered the question of age unnecessary when you married me two months ago?

Jones. I was not in this part of the country two months ago.

Dido. (*Handing him the marriage certificate.*) Perhaps you will deny your own signature.

Jones. The signature is mine, but I do not remember having ever seen you before.

Dido. This is strange! I have no recollection of your face either, but it appears you married me. Mr. Gopepper, your name is on this paper as a witness.

Man. (*Aside.*) I am totally unprepared for such a sudden denouement. I will get that \$10,000 and leave.

Gop. Umph! This is my autograph, but I do not remember ornamenting a marriage certificate with it. Let me see. This looks like a paper I signed for Senator Manners; but he told me it was a petition for the annexation of St. Domingo.

Jones. Manners! Manners! I married Wiley Manners to a lady in San Francisco ten years ago, but she is now confined in a California lunatic asylum.

Dido. Are you sure?

Jones. (*Examining the paper.*) And this is the very certificate I gave him at that time.

Dido. (*Hysterically.*) Are you sure? Man! are you sure?

Jones. The name of the bride, the date, and the place have been altered.

Dido. You, you are not deceiving me? Oh, Adam, take me! I am free! free! (*ADAM catches her as she faints, and places her on a sofa, where she is attended to by his mother.*)

Adam. Mine! mine at last! Jones, you have a conscience and are wanted here. Build a church, synagogue, or joss house, and I will worship with you. (*Slaps GOPEPPER violently on the back.*) Why don't you wish me happiness, you churl? (*Crosses to TOM.*) Give me your hand, Tom, your sister is mine! (*Addressing DALRYMPLE.*) Do you hear me, old boy? She is mine! (*Changing his tone.*) Excuse me, sir, my joy has upset my reason, or else the wine has mounted to my head. (*Turns around and espies MANNERS, who has secured the money, stuffing the bills hastily in his pocket.*)

Man. (*With assumed hilarity.*) Since no one else appears to share your joy, allow me to congratulate you on the possession of a lady whose flirtations have become a subject of unfavorable rumor.

Adam. Your statement would not add any weight to the rumor, nor would it detract one jot from her reputation. (*Advances to MANNERS, draws his hand from his pocket, and the bills scatter on the floor.*) A Senator! You said you did not believe the bills were in the package. A liar! A Senator and a liar! It was you who stole them! A thief! A Senator! a liar! and a thief!

Dal. You will not smoke, chew, nor drink, but you will lie, steal, and attempt bigamy. You disgrace the honorable body of which you are a member.

Man. The honorable body won't mind it. My only crime among my peers will consist in having been found out.

Dal. I would not add this scandal to their record of infamy. As the price of our silence, however, you will immediately resign your seat in the Senate, and if I ever hear of you in politics again, I will expose you.

Man. I am powerless, and must accept your conditions.

Gop. Congressional truth crushed to earth, will rise again in the lobby.

Man. No, sir. I will never attempt to compete with female labor. I shall pack my carpet-bag and go South.

Gop. Hold on! Hadn't you better take this Bible with you? It has lost its value as a book of reference, but you still might find some balm for your lacerated spirit within its pages.

Man. I wouldn't deprive you of it for the world; you will need it so much more among the Kickapoos. [*Exit.*

Gop. There goes my chance for political preferment. Time has softened my youthful ardor; tempered my generous enthusiasm, and now I am ready to flesh my maiden shoe brush in a box of blacking. Failing in art, I am prepared for Christian burial.

Dal. I hope as an amateur corpse you may yet live to do some credit to yourself. (*DIDO rises from the sofa and clasps MRS. GUDGEON around the neck.*)

Dido. Mother!

Mrs. G. Be composed, child, he is gone forever.

Dido. Who?

Mrs. G. Why, Senator Manners, of course.

Dido. Oh! I am so happy.

Dal. Young man, I have judged you hastily, but you must excuse my harshness, as it was provoked by your own violence.

Adam. You will pardon my exhibition of temper when I tell you that I never had my word doubted before.

Bath. And so was not as well prepared for city life as Columbus.

Dal. I owe you some redress; here it is. (*Places DIDO's hand in ADAM'S.*)

Adam. I accept your graceful apology.

Dido. This is only making a virtue of necessity, papa. Now if you were to show some sympathy for those two forlorn-looking wretches, it would be an evidence of genuine contrition.

Gop. Be magnanimous, like me. (*Joins TOM and JANE by the hands.*) There, boy, take her and be good. Name your first kid after me and I will make him my heir.

Mrs. G. Under such circumstances, Mr. Dalrymple, it would be folly for us to withhold our consent.

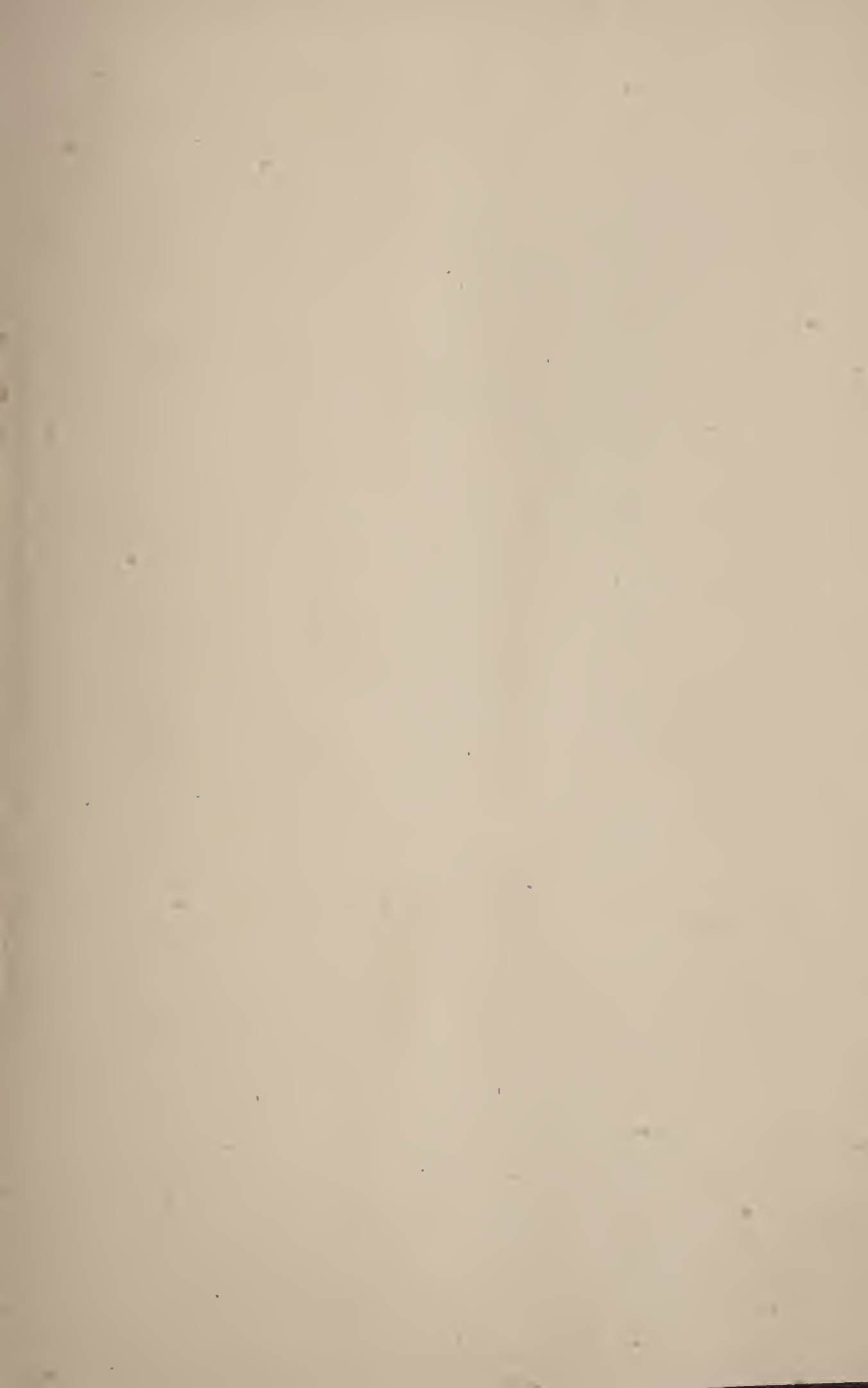
Tom. Let us have a double wedding, and save expense.

Dal. Well, Jones, I turn them all over to you. Do the best you can for them.

Gop. Is everybody satisfied now?

Dido. Not until we hear from our friends in front. When our efforts to please have received their approval, we will all be satisfied with the result of "A Serious Flirtation."

END OF ACT IV.



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